

Food poisoning hits hundreds in Japan

OSAKA, June 30: Hundreds of people in Japan's western Kansai region were showing signs of food poisoning today after drinking milk from the country's biggest dairy product maker, government officials said, reports Reuters.

Caltiger.com of India to get overseas listing

NEW DELHI, June 30: India's first free Internet service provider Caltiger.com will get an overseas listing in October raising 100 million dollars abroad, the company chairman Joe Silva said yesterday, reports AFP.

8th board meet of Islami Insurance held

The 8th meeting of the Board of Directors of Islami Insurance Bangladesh Limited was held at a city hotel recently.

Microsoft, Jupiter to merge cable interests in Japan

WASHINGTON, June 30: Microsoft and Jupiter Telecommunications of the United States are about to announce the merger of their cable operations in Japan in a deal that would create the largest Japanese cable enterprise, the Financial Times reported yesterday in its online edition, says AFP.

Microsoft, Jupiter to merge cable interests in Japan

The combined company would be owned 35 per cent by Liberty Media and Microsoft chairman Bill Gates would unveil the report today.

Pakistan keen to increase trade with rival India

ISLAMABAD, June 30: Pakistan's military-led government said Thursday that it wants to increase trade with rival India, reports AP.

But because of the strained relations over the disputed region of Kashmir, trading has been restricted.

There was no immediate comment from India.

Pervez Musharraf has sought renewed talks with India over Kashmir. But India has refused demanding that Islamabad should first put an end to cross-border incursions by militants in its controlled Kashmir.

S Americans gear up for relaunching Mercosur

BUENOS AIRES, June 30: South America's Mercosur began a meeting yesterday to generate new momentum for the world's third-largest trade bloc after a tough year, but the prospect of bringing in Chile as a full member looked distant, says Reuters.

Chilean Foreign Minister Soledad Alvear said it was too early to say when her country could join a bloc that protects its industries from imports from outside Mercosur with tariffs that range from about 10 per cent to about 30 per cent.

Argentine officials say in private that they are much more eager to reduce tariffs than their counterparts in Brazil.

Australian trade deficit widens on import surge

SYDNEY, June 30: A surge in imports in May saw a sharp widening of Australia's trade deficit today, contributing to a dip in the Australian dollar below 60 US cents, says Reuters.

Official figures showed the balance on goods and services trade was in deficit by A\$1.553 billion in May, above forecasts for a \$1.0 billion gap.



French police forces stand in front of Millau's McDonald's Friday, prior to the opening of the trial against leader of farmer movement Jose Bove and nine colleagues from the Peasant Confederation, for the attack on the garrison of globalisation, the local McDonald's, in August 1999. A crowd of 30,000 demonstrators against globalisation is expected in Millau to support Jose Bove.

US business presses for Clinton trade vote

WASHINGTON, June 30: Big business yesterday stepped up pressure on Senate Republican Leader Trent Lott to schedule a final vote in July on a landmark China trade bill, warning that foot-dragging could hurt US companies and prompt a backlash from corporate donors ahead of the November elections, says Reuters.

Commerce, stopped short of threatening to withhold campaign support ahead of the Nov. 7 presidential and congressional elections over Senate foot-dragging.

Clinton moves to release \$20m for DPRK oil

WASHINGTON, June 30: President Bill Clinton took a routine step yesterday to release up to \$20 million in US funds to provide oil to North Korea as part of a deal to rein in Pyongyang's nuclear programme, the White House said, reports Reuters.



Picture shows the 8th meeting of the Board of Directors of Islami Insurance Bangladesh Limited held at a city hotel recently.

IBM supercomputer aims at beating human brain's computing skill!

WASHINGTON, June 30: IBM announced it has built the most powerful supercomputer in the world, able to perform 12.3 trillion operations per second, three times faster than the next-fastest computer, says AP.

Under the ASCI contracts, the department pays a company — in this case, \$110 million — to build a computer that can simulate the testing of nuclear weapons.

In creating ASCI White, IBM exceeded one of the most venerable axioms of computing, Moore's Law. The rule, offered by Intel founder Gordon Moore in the early days of electronic computing, maintains that computer power will double every 12 months to 18 months.

IBM officials said that the new system could contribute to breakthroughs in financial models, genetic computing and allow a country to monitor national air space with a single machine.

Tibetans urge WB to scrap China project

WASHINGTON, June 30: Protesters from Tibet and elsewhere urged the World Bank yesterday to scrap a contested plan to resettle poor farmers in traditional Tibetan lands, praying and singing songs to draw attention to their cause, says Reuters.

China annexed Tibet in 1951 and rules it from Beijing. The World Bank's \$160 million loan, approved last year, would resettle 60,000 poor farmers, moving some of them to lands where Tibet's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, was born.

Thai lower house okays \$23.2b deficit budget

BANGKOK, June 30: Thailand's lower house of parliament passed the 2000/2001 (October-September) budget at its first reading yesterday night after a debate overshadowed by the resignation of more than 90 opposition politicians, reports Reuters.

US economic boom fails to benefit workers

NEW YORK, June 30: America's longest ever economic expansion has failed to benefit all workers as poverty levels among full-time employees have changed little since the early 1970s, a new study made public yesterday found, reports Reuters.

The study found that minorities in the workforce have higher levels of poverty and lag behind whites in income, although they now make up more than 25 per cent of full-time workforce. "Today, a nonwhite full-time worker is one and a half times more likely to be poor," it said.

million workers. That was about the same increase as occurred in 1981, a year of economic recession, the study found.

First-quarter GDP was fuelled by the strongest consumer spending in 17 years and prices climbed at the fastest pace in 5-1/2 years — both of which are likely to heighten Fed concern it may be difficult to slow demand enough to curb inflation.

However, they warned they felt inflation risks were high. That left the US central bank poised to hike rates again as early as at its next policy session on Aug 22 unless convincing signs of slowing appear.

But even after the resignation of the SAP and NAP representatives, there will still be at least 40 opposition MPs in the lower house.

Political analysts say this would give Chuan the appearance of constitutional legitimacy and allow him to remain in office for a while longer.